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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE UNDER SECRETARY
U/OP

April 3, 1956

Memorandum for: Mr. Elmer Staats,
Executive Officer, OCB

From: Arthur L. Richards

Subject: Full Implementation of NSC Action 1386b and Increased Radio
Transmitting Facilities

At the Board Assistants' meeting on March 30, 1956, under Agenda Item 1, the following was recorded in the Minutes:

"Requested the OCB Committee on Broadcasting and Television to prepare a short report for the Board not later than six months hence, in addition to any necessary special reports on individual problems which they may desire."

The continuance of Soviet radio activities in the Balkan and Middle East areas suggests the need for full employment of United States facilities in accordance with previous NSC decisions.

At the Foreign Ministers' Conference, held in Geneva last October, the Soviets rejected any arrangement which would lead to the freer interchange of ideas and strongly defended their right to jam. It appears therefore that there will be no let-up in the "war of ideas",

It is evident from the attached study, TAB A, that the effectiveness of United States broadcasting directed to the Balkans, Southwestern and Central Russia, Asia and the Far and Middle East is insufficient in power to cope with the redefined Soviet objective.

It is understood that the President and the Under Secretary at a meeting of the National Security Council held on February 3, 1955, agreed that four existing warehoused high-power transmitters should be utilized in combatting communist propaganda. The Council, responsive to the desire of the President, by action 1386-b (April 1955) concurred in principle with the activation of additional high-powered transmitters.

The Operations Coordinating Board, in a progress report to the National Security Council dated February 7, 1956, indicated that the only action taken to date in response to the Council's action is planning for the installation of one of these transmitters in the vicinity of Tangier.

It is accordingly requested that the OCB working Group be called upon to study the desirability, as a matter of urgency, of a) the full implementation of NSC Action 1386b and b) the early installation of existing high-powered short and medium wave broadcasting transmitters in the Greek area.

(Attachment not available for distribution)

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INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING FACILITIESBackground

1. The National Security Council, by action 1386b on April 28, 1955 concurred in principle with the activation of additional high-powered transmitters. The plan before the NSC on that date called for the installation of two-500 KW shortwave transmitters at Tangier, one 1000 KW mediumwave and two-500 KW shortwave transmitters in the Greek area, and two-500 KW shortwave transmitters in the Philippines. These plans had been drawn up as the result of various engineering studies, all of which recommended the use of "higher-power transmitters and higher-gain antennas".

Present Situation

2. The OCB Progress Report to the NSC on #169 dated February 1, 1956, informs that the only action taken in response to the NSC's action is the planning for installation of two-500 KW shortwave transmitters at Tangier. One full year has now gone by without any real implementation of the NSC action - a considerable time in view of the fact that the installation of such facilities takes from 2 to 2½ years.

3. The international situation is continually worsening. As pointed out by the State Department, at the Foreign Ministers' Conference held in Geneva last October, the Soviets rejected any arrangement which would lead to the freer interchange of ideas and strongly defended their right to jam. Since then the steadily increasing jamming capabilities of the Soviets have not been matched by improvement in U.S. technical broadcasting capabilities.

4. TPIB and COBAT have studied the coverage of present U.S. broadcasting facilities directed toward the Middle East, the Balkans, Southwestern and Central Russia, Asia and the Far East. It is their opinion that present facilities are inadequate and that the plan approved over a year ago should be implemented. The U.S. is in danger of losing the "war of ideas" because it is not fully utilizing its available resources. The total broadcasting facilities of VOA represent over 14 million watts capacity; of this total, over 6 million watts (42%) previously ordered and delivered are still in storage.

Recommendation

5. TPIB and COBAT therefore recommend that the Board urge that the responsible agencies take necessary steps to achieve full implementation of NSC Action 1386b, with budgetary provision therefor, as a matter of urgency. Specific actions required to secure full implementation are:

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- a. Expedite the project in the Tangier area.
- b. Implement the original plans in the Greek area on land where base rights have already been negotiated (installation of one 1000 KW mediumwave and two 500 KW shortwave transmitters) rather than present plans, which are considered inadequate, for one 500 KW mediumwave transmitter to be operated at one-half power (250 KW).
- c. Implement the activation of two 500 KW shortwave transmitters in the Philippines as originally submitted to the NSC, in addition to the installation of two 100 KW shortwave transmitters as recently proposed.

(signed by)

T. H. E. Nesbitt

for The Technical Panel for International Broadcasting
and The Committee for Broadcasting and Television

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